

Copyright © 1984 Ohio Acad. Sci.

0030-0950/84/0001-0035 \$2.00/0

THE HERPETOFAUNA OF ADAMS COUNTY, OHIO<sup>1</sup>

PAUL M. DANIEL, Department of Zoology, Miami University, Oxford, OH 45056

**ABSTRACT.** Examination of museum collections and published accounts were combined with visits to Adams Co., Ohio, to determine the occurrence of reptiles and amphibians there. Nineteen salamander, 12 frog and toad, 4 lizard, 15 snake and at least 4 turtle species have been recorded in the county. This is more than has been recorded from any other county in Ohio and further substantiates the unusual nature of this part of Ohio.

OHIO J. SCI. 84 (1): 35-43, 1984

---

INTRODUCTION

Several attempts have been made to survey the Ohio herpetofauna in general. Notable and relatively recent among these have been those of Conant (1951)

and Walker (1946). The detailed herpetological distributions of regions and counties within Ohio include those of Ashton (1976) in Preble Co., Wood and Duellman (1947) for Montgomery Co., Duellman (1951) for Green Co., Blem (1972) for Hardin Co. and Fichter (1947) for Butler Co. in the till plains. Ruffer

---

<sup>1</sup>Manuscript received 4 April 1983 and in revised form 27 June 1983 (#83-13).

et al. (1968) lists herpetofauna for a portion of Defiance Co. and Langlois (1964) for the Lake Erie islands of the lake plains physiographic area. A salamander report on southeastern Ohio by Siebert and Brandon (1960) is from the Allegheny plateau, most of it unglaciated.

Adams Co. is unique in many ways. Its 1510 km<sup>2</sup> are located in south central Ohio bordered by Brown Co. on the west, Pike and Highland counties on the north, Scioto Co. on the east and the Ohio River and Kentucky on the south and are underlain by, from west to east, Ordovician, Silurian, Devonian limestones, dolomites and shales and Mississippian limestones and sandstones. Bedrock provides a wide variety of soil parent materials resulting in a wide variety of soil types. Parts of 3 major physiographic provinces are in the county. The northwestern third lies in the till plains that cover most of the rest of western Ohio. Soils here are derived from Illinoian tills. The topography is rolling, and agriculture is the chief land use. The bluegrass region that occupies much of north central Kentucky is sometimes referred to as the Lexington Plain and has its surface features formed by stream erosion of limestone bedrock. Irregular contours with forest cover on the slopes and agriculture on the terraces are characteristic of this region (Noble and Karsak 1975). The unglaciated plateau is characterized by high narrow ridges and deep valleys with a range in elevation from 180 to 400 m. A highly faulted region with deep-sided narrow valleys lies in Bratton Twp. This area of about 21 km<sup>2</sup> has been explained by both cryptovolcanic and meteoric impact theories (figs. 1 and 2).

The unique nature of Adams Co. was recognized by Thomas (1951) in his discussion of boundaries in providing habitat for range extension. This has been further documented by (McCance 1977). The diverse geological features, fauna, and flora within this political entity have attracted and continue to attract many naturalists to



FIGURE 1. Physiographic areas of Ohio (Conant 1951).

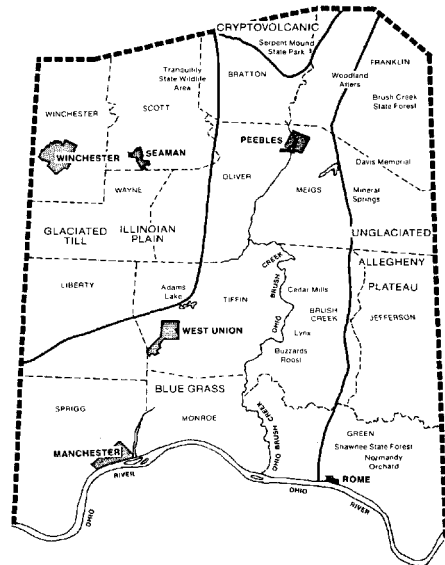


FIGURE 2. Physiographic areas of Ohio as they occur in Adams Co., Ohio, with several collecting sites indicated.

the area, and fortunately many of these persons have deposited specimens in various museums. It is my purpose to list the herpetofauna combining personal observations, published accounts and museum material.

## METHODS AND MATERIALS

Literature examined includes Walker (1946), Conant (1951) and some of the preliminary drafts being prepared for *Salamanders of Ohio* by the Ohio Biological Survey (Pfingsten, in press). Collections examined include those at The Ohio State University Museum of Zoology, Miami University, Ohio University, the Dayton Museum of Natural History, and the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History. At least 19 visits were made to the county between 1972 and 1983 and suitable habitat for herpetofauna was searched by the writer and his students. Specimens that represented new records for the county or in some cases the township were deposited in the Miami University Collections but most specimens were examined and released. Records were kept for each species, and these are summarized in tables 1-5. Only one specific locality is given for each township. Others are available from the author. The names utilized are from the Society for Study of Amphibians and Reptiles list of common and current scientific names (Collins et al. 1978).

## RESULTS

**SALAMANDERS.** Nineteen species are recorded in table 1. Specimens of *Ambystoma jeffersonianum* may be that species or one of the triploid forms of the complex. Both large aquatic forms, *Necturus maculosus* and *Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*, are based on old records, and the present

status of these animals in the county is not known. It should be noted that 3 Ohio salamanders designated as rare and endangered in Ohio and offered protection by state law are found in Adams Co. These are *Eurycea lucifuga*, *Aneides aeneus* and *Hemidactylium scutatum*.

**FROGS AND TOADS.** Walker (1946) recorded 2 toads from the family Bufonidae, 3 frogs from the Hylidae and 5 species of Ranidae. Fieldwork since that time has added the hylids *Acris crepitans* and *Pseudacris triseriata* to the herpetofauna of the county (table 2).

**TURTLES.** The turtle fauna has probably been least investigated, and a thorough search of aquatic habitats might well add several additions to the fauna such as *Chrysemys picta*, *Chrysemys scripta*, *Stenotherus odoratus* and *Trionyx muticus*. Four species are recorded in table 3.

**LIZARDS.** Four of the 5 species recorded from Ohio have been recorded from Adams Co. Of these, *Eumeces laticeps* is the only species not taken since 1960, but recent records from adjacent counties indicate that populations within Adams Co. might still exist (table 4).

TABLE 1  
*Salamanders of Adams Co., Ohio.*

Species	Latest Record	Townships	Selected Specific Localities	Museum Number*
Family Cryptobranchidae				
<i>Cryptobranchus alleganiensis</i> Hellbender	1931	Sprigg	Ohio River	OSU 668A668
Family Necturidae				
<i>Necturus maculosus</i> Mudpuppy	1931	Sprigg	Ohio River	OSU 2263CA668
Family Ambystomidae				
<i>Ambystoma texanum</i> Smallmouth salamander	1963	Jefferson Brush Creek	10.4 km E. of West Union	OSU 332A332 OSU 4003 OSU 3622 OSU 3964 OSU 2463
<i>Ambystoma opacum</i> Marbled salamander	1963	Tiffin  Jefferson Green	9.6 km E. of West Union Rt. 125 Blue Creek 1.6 km W. of Buena Vista	OSU 807A807 OSU A1148A181
<i>Ambystoma jeffersonianum</i> Jefferson salamander	1983	Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU A360
<i>Ambystoma maculatum</i> Spotted salamander	1982	Monroe Meigs Franklin	Mineral Springs Woodland Alters	OSU 182A182 MU A313 MU A317

TABLE 1—(Continued)  
*Salamanders of Adams Co., Ohio.*

Species	Latest Record	Townships	Selected Specific Localities	Museum Number*
Family Salamandridae				
<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	1983	Franklin	Woodland Alters	MU A326
Eastern newt		Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU A328
		Jefferson		O.U.V.C. 4010
		Green	Normandy Orchard	MU A309
Family Plethodontidae				
<i>Desmognathus fuscus</i>	1983	Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU A304
Dusky salamander		Brush Creek	Wilderness Preserve	P.O.
		Sprigg	Ginger Ridge	MU A210
		Green	Vastine Run	MU A357
<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	1976	Meigs	On Cedar Fork	OSU 2410
Redback salamander		Liberty		OSU 553A553
		Tiffin	West Union	CMNH 928
		Brush Creek	Near Lynx	P.O.
		Sprigg	Ginger Ridge	MU A209
		Green	Near Co. Rd. 18 in cave	OSU 2671
<i>Plethodon richmondi</i>	1982	Franklin	Woodland Alters	MU A325
Ravine salamander		Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU A107
		Brush Creek	Near Lynx	P.O.
		Sprigg	Slopes of Ginger Ridge	MU A211
		Monroe	5.6 km W. of Manchester	DMNH 2209
		Green	Wycoff Run	P.O.
<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	1983	Franklin	Woodland Alters	MU A323
Slimy salamander		Meigs	Lawshe	P.O.
		Liberty		OSU 1369A553
		Tiffin	West Union	CMNH523
		Brush Creek	Wilderness Preserve	P.O.
		Monroe	Wrightsville	OSU 178A178
		Green	Vastine Run	MU A356
<i>Hemidactylium scutatum</i>	1974	Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU A132
Four-toed salamander		Green	Normandy Orchard	OSU 3489
<i>Aneides aeneus</i>		Brush Creek	Buzzard's Roost	DMNH 2973
Green salamander		Green	Black Hollow	DMNH 2861
<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	1983	Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU A303
Spring salamander		Green	Near Lower Twin Creek	MU A355
<i>Pseudotriton ruber</i>	1977	Meigs	Davis Memorial	MU A227
Red salamander		Green	Black Hollow	DMNH 3303
<i>Pseudotriton montanus</i>	1963	Meigs	Cedar Run	OSU 2437
Mud salamander		Green	Wycoff Run	OSU 2432
<i>Eurycea lucifuga</i>	1964	Brush Creek	3.2 km So. of Lynx	OSU 3709 and
Cave salamander				OSU 3900
<i>Eurycea longicanda</i>	1980	Scott	Buck Run	P.O.
Longtail salamander		Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU A303
		Jefferson		OSU 221A221
		Sprigg	Ginger Ridge	P.O.
		Green	Vastine Run	OSU 3772
<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>	1983	Scott	Tranquility Wildlife Area	P.O.
Two-lined salamander		Bratton	Serpent Mound	OSU 1397A452
		Franklin	Woodland Alters	MU A324
		Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU A302
		Brush Creek	Cedar Mills	OSU 286A454
		Sprigg	Ginger Ridge	MU A212
		Monroe	4.0 km W. of Manchester	DMNH 2215
		Green	Normandy Orchard	MU A221

\*CMNH—Cincinnati Museum of Natural History; DMNH—Dayton Museum of Natural History; MU—Miami University; OSU—The Ohio State University Museum of Zoology; OUV—Ohio University Vertebrate Collection; P.O.—Personal observation.

TABLE 2  
*Frogs and toads of Adams Co., Ohio.*

Species	Latest Record	Townships	Selected Specific Localities	Museum Number*
Family Bufonidae				
<i>Bufo woodhousei</i> Woodhouse's toad	1982	Bratton Meigs Tiffin Brush Creek Jefferson	Serpent Mound Mineral Springs West Union Buzzard's Roost Btwn. Lynx & Blue Creek	OSU 1525A452 MU A215 DMNH 2875 P.O. OSU 1522A431
<i>Bufo americanus</i> American toad	1982	Monroe Scott  Meigs Tiffin Monroe Green	Pumpkin Ridge Tranquility Wildlife Area Mineral Springs West Union Island Creek Road	MU A238 MU A204  MU A216 P.O. P.O. SL 575 (from Walker 1946)
Family Hylidae				
<i>Hyla versicolor</i> Gray treefrog	1982	Meigs Brush Creek Jefferson Green	Mineral Springs Buzzard's Roost Cedar Mills Rome Hill	MU A243 P.O. OSU 1989 OSU 2469
<i>Hyla crucifer</i> Spring peeper	1982	Bratton Franklin Meigs Green	Serpent Mound Woodland Alters Mineral Springs 1.6 km W. of Buena Vista	P.O. MU A318 MU A314 OSU 1537A92
<i>Pseudacris triseriata</i> Striped chorus frog	1963	Green	Rome Hill	OSU 2411
<i>Pseudacris brachyphona</i> Mountain chorus frog	1982	Brush Creek Green	Cedar Mills Smokey Creek	OSU 1951A476 OSU 2501
<i>Acris crepitans</i> Northern cricket frog	1976	Scott	1.6 km S. of Highland Co. line on Rt. 247	DMNH 2814
Family Ranidae				
<i>Rana pipiens</i> Northern leopard frog	1938	Franklin	3.2 km W. of Locust Grove	OSU 2009
<i>Rana palustris</i> Pickeral frog	1946 (from Walker)	Meigs Green	Ohio Brush Creek Near Stout	OSU 1662A453 UMMZ 88848
<i>Rana sylvatica</i> Wood frog	1983	Meigs Brush Creek  Green	Ohio Brush Creek Pond near Bethany Ridge Rd. 8.0 km N.W. of Buena Vista	OSU 1694A453 MU A308  OSU 2618
<i>Rana catesbeiana</i> Bull frog	1982	Winchester Bratton Meigs Liberty Jefferson  Monroe Green	Pond near Rt. 32 Serpent Mound Mineral Springs  Turkey Run near Rts. 781 and 386 Pumpkin Ridge Normandy Orchard	MU A327 OSU 1595A452 MU A315 OUVC 4001 P.O. MU A237 MU A312
<i>Rana clamitans</i> Green frog	1981	Meigs Green	Mineral Springs Normandy Orchard	MU A258 MU A311

\*DMNH — Dayton Museum of Natural History; MU — Miami University; OSU — The Ohio State University Museum of Zoology; OUVC — Ohio University Vertebrate Collection; P.O. — Personal observation; SL — Stone Lab; UMMZ — University of Michigan Museum of Zoology.

TABLE 3  
*Turtles of Adams Co., Ohio.*

Species	Latest Record	Townships	Selected Specific Localities	Museum Number*
<i>Chelydra serpentina</i> Snapping turtle	1982	Bratton	Quarry near Serpent Mound	MU R86
<i>Graptemys geographica</i> Map turtle	1970	Brush Creek Meigs	Cedar Mills Ohio Brush Creek at Rt. 41 bridge	C OSU 1404
<i>Terrapene carolina</i> Eastern box turtle	1983	Franklin Meigs Brush Creek Sprigg Monroe Green	Mineral Springs Lynx Manchester 5.6 km E. of Manchester Normandy Orchard	OSU 1273 CMNH 920 P.O. C DMNH 2249 P.O.
<i>Trionyx spinifera</i> Spiny softshell	1970	Meigs	Ohio Brush Creek at Rt. 41 bridge	OSU 1405

\*C— from Conant; CMNH — Cincinnati Museum of Natural History; MU — Miami University; OSU — The Ohio State University Museum of Zoology; P.O. — Personal observation.

TABLE 4  
*Lizards of Adams Co., Ohio.*

Species	Latest Record	Townships	Selected Specific Localities	Museum Number*
<i>Sceloporus undulatus</i> Eastern fence lizard	1977	Bratton Franklin Meigs Brush Jefferson Monroe Green	Serpent Mound East of Locust Grove Beaver Pond Buzzard's Roost Buzzard's Rock 9.6 km E. of Manchester Near Sandy Springs	C OSU 801R388 C MUR60 C DMNH 2425 OSU 797R168
<i>Scincella lateralis</i> Ground skink	1963	Green	3.2 km E. of Rome near Rt. 52	OSU 1139
<i>Eumeces fasciatus</i> Five-lined skink	1976	Meigs Brush Creek Jefferson Green	Mineral Springs Near Lynx	P.O. P.O. OUVC 3717 OSU 1163
<i>Eumeces laticeps</i> Broadhead skink	1932	Brush Creek	Smokey Creek Near Ohio Brush Creek	OSU R400

\*C — from Conant; DMNH — Dayton Museum of Natural History; MU — Miami University; OSU — The Ohio State University Museum of Zoology; OUVC — Ohio University Vertebrate Collection; P.O. — Personal observation.

SNAKES. Conant (1951) records 23 species of snakes from Ohio and 14 from Adams Co. Only *Storeria occipitomaculata* has been added since that time. It is noteworthy that all species have been recorded since 1960 (table 5).

## DISCUSSION

The Butler, Preble, Green, Montgomery and Hardin Co. studies are all from the till plains of Ohio, and each contains considerably fewer total species of herpetofauna than is recorded here from Adams Co. This

TABLE 5  
Snakes of Adams Co., Ohio.

Species	Latest Record	Townships	Selected Specific Localities	Museum Number*
<i>Nerodia sipedon</i> Northern water snake	1982	Scott	1.6 km S. of Highland Co. Line	DMNH 2203
		Bratton	Serpent Mound	OSU 454R245
		Meigs	Peach Mountain	C
		Jefferson	Blue Creek	OSU 453R241
		Oliver	Ohio Brush Creek	MU R91
<i>Regina septemvittata</i> Queen snake	1982	Scott	Tranquility Wildlife Preserve	P.O.
		Meigs	Peebles	C
		Tiffin	Ohio Brush Creek	C
		Brush Creek	Ohio Brush Creek	MU R89
		Jefferson		C
<i>Storeria occipitomaculata</i> Redbelly snake	1979	Meigs		OUCV 3456
<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i> Common garter snake	1983	Green		OSU 1676
		Winchester	Pond W. of Winchester along Rt. 32	MU R88
		Scott	Along Rt. 246, 1.6 km S. of Highland Co. line	DMNH 2199
		Meigs •	Davis Memorial	P.O.
		Monroe		OSU 1757
		Green		C
<i>Virginia valeriae</i> Smooth earth snake	1963	Jefferson	Co. Rd. 18, 3.2 km S. of Rt. 125 on W. side of road	OSU 1656
		Green	Smokey Creek	CMNH 2600
<i>Heterodon platyrhinos</i> Eastern hognose snake	1982	Brush Creek	Buzzard's Roost	P.O.
<i>Diadophis punctatus</i> Ringneck snake	1980	Green		OSU 198R81
		Franklin		C
		Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU R72
		Monroe	9.6 km E. of Manchester	DMNH 2250
		Green	Rt. 52	
<i>Carpophis amoenus</i> Worm snake	1966	Long Lick Run		OSU 1142
		Franklin	4.8 km S. of Locust Grove	OSU 153R759
		Jefferson		OSU 2086
		Green	Smokey Creek	C
<i>Coluber constrictor</i> Racer	1974	Winchester	Winchester	C
		Meigs	Between Lawshe & Peebles	MU R26
		Brush Creek	Near Lynx Prairie	C
		Sprigg	8.0 km S.E. of Manchester	C
		Green	Near Stout	C
<i>Opheodrys aestivus</i> Rough green snake	1960	Meigs	Mineral Springs	C
		Brush Creek	1.6 km W. of Lynx	C
		Green		OUCV 4000
<i>Elaphe obsoleta</i> Rat snake	1978	Meigs	Mineral Springs	MU R62
		Tiffin	Rt. 41 N. of Winchester	P.O.
		Jefferson		OUCV 4009
		Green		OSU 1538
<i>Lampropeltis getulus</i> Common kingsnake	1982	Brush Creek	Near Lynx	P.O.
		Jefferson		C
<i>Lampropeltis triangulum</i> Milk snake	1964	Meigs	Rome Hill	OSU 1553
		Green	Between Peebles & Lawshe	OSU 43R299
<i>Agkistrodon contortrix</i> Copperhead	1963	Meigs	Rome Hill	OSU 1549
		Jefferson	4.8 km S. of Peebles	OSU 1143
		Green	Dead on Road	C
<i>Crotalus horridus</i> Timber rattlesnake	1964	Green	Long Lick Run	OSU 1135
			Rome Hill	OSU 1541

\*C—from Conant; CMNH—Cincinnati Museum of Natural History; DMNH—Dayton Museum of Natural History; MU—Miami University; OSU—The Ohio State University Museum of Zoology; OUCV—Ohio University Vertebrate Collection; P.O.—Personal observations.

TABLE 6  
*Herpetofauna of Adams Co. and other Ohio regions.*

Region	Investigators	Date	Salamander Species	Anuran Species	Lizard Species	Snake Species	Turtle Species	Total
Montgomery	Wood and Duellman	1947	9	7	1	13	5	35
Greene Co.	Duellman	1951	4	10	0	12	7	33
Preble Co.	Ashton	1976	8	9	3	10	4	34
Butler Co.	Fichter	1947	n.a.*	n.a.	1	11	4	n.a.
Hardin Co.	Blem	1972	3	9	1	12	4	29
Erie Islands	Langlois	1964	7	7	0	11	3	28
Tree Farm	Ruffer,	1968	1	5	0	3	3	12
Defiance Co.	Leonard and Sherger							
Southeast Ohio	Siebert and	1960	19	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
12 Counties	Brandon							
Adams Co.	Daniel	1983	19	12	4	15	4	54

\*Not available

is also true for the Defiance Co. tree farm and Lake Erie islands studies which are included in the lake plains physiographic region. The salamander study in several southeastern Ohio counties contained the same number of species as is found in Adams Co. It is probable that other glacial boundary areas and areas of the unglaciated Allegheny plateau might well yield a high variety of species if sufficiently investigated. Table 6 lists the numbers of species from several studies done in the till plains, lake plains and Allegheny plateau as well as numbers from Adams Co. It should be recognized, however, that studies of political entities are not necessarily of equal size nor is the effort to collect and compile the lists necessarily equal.

Conant (1951) indicates the fewest number of reptile species (14) within the bluegrass physiographic area of Ohio but further indicates that this may be due to its small area in Ohio and to its agricultural usage and that greater collecting effort might increase this number. This has been demonstrated here if collections from Sprigg, Monroe, Green, Brush Creek, Tiffin, Oliver, Meigs, Franklin and Bratton Twp. are considered to be in or adjacent to the bluegrass physiographic region. Many good collecting sites for reptiles and am-

phibians are associated close to the boundary between bluegrass and unglaciated Allegheny plateau. These include Woodland Alters in Franklin Twp., Mineral Springs and Davis Memorial in Meigs Twp., Cedar Mills, Lynx and Buzzard's Roost in Brush Creek Twp. and Normandy Orchard in Green Twp. (fig. 2).

Adams Co. is a region of physiographic boundaries which provide diverse habitats. Green Twp. has the greatest number of species recorded.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS. Thanks are due to David Stansbery and John Condit of The Ohio State University Museum of Zoology for cooperation in using museum material. I thank Henri Siebert of Ohio University, Gary Coover and Diana Morse of the Dayton Museum of Natural History, and Richard Davis of the Cincinnati Museum of Natural History for the use of their collections. Finally, I thank the many students and friends who assisted in the field portions of the study over several years.

#### LITERATURE CITED

- Ashton, R. E. 1976 The herpetofauna of Preble County, Ohio. *Ohio J. Sci.* 76: 33-38.  
 Blem, C. R. 1972 An annotated list of the amphibians and reptiles of Hardin County, Ohio. *Ohio J. Sci.* 72: 91-96.  
 Collins, J. T., J. E. Huheey, J. L. Knight and H. M. Smith 1978 Standard common and current scientific names for North American amphibians and reptiles. *Herpetological Circ. No. 7*, Soc. Study of Amphibians and Reptiles.



- Conant, R. 1951 The reptiles of Ohio, 2nd ed. Amer. Midl. Natur. Notre Dame, IN.
- Duellman, W. E. 1951 Notes on the reptiles and amphibians of Greene County, Ohio. Ohio J. Sci. 51: 335-341.
- Fichter, G. S. 1947 Preliminary list of the reptiles of Butler County, Ohio. Herpetologica 4: 71-73.
- Langlois, T. H. 1964 Amphibians and reptiles of the Lake Erie islands. Ohio J. Sci. 64: 11-25.
- McCance, R. M. 1977 Ohio natural heritage program technical report. Div. Natur. Areas and Preserves, Ohio Depr. Natur. Prog., Columbus.
- Noble, A. G. and A. J. Karsak 1975 Ohio—An American Heartland. Bull. 65 Ohio Geol. Surv.
- Pfingsten, Ralph, (ed.) Salamanders of Ohio. Ohio Biol. Surv. (In Press).
- Ruffer, D. G., D. Leonard and G. Sherger 1968 Checklist of amphibians, reptiles and mammals of the Tree Farm Natural Area, Defiance County, Ohio. Ohio J. Sci. 68: 312-315.
- Siebert, H. and R. Brandon 1960 The salamanders of southeastern Ohio. Ohio J. Sci. 60: 291-303.
- Thomas, E. S. 1951 Distribution of Ohio animals. Ohio J. Sci. 51: 153-167.
- Walker, C. F. 1946 The amphibians of Ohio: Part I. The frogs and toads. Ohio State Mus. Sci. Bull. 1: 3.
- Wood, J. T. and W. E. Duellman 1947 Preliminary herpetological survey of Montgomery County, Ohio. Herpetologica 4: 3-6.